

REMARKS

In the September 1, 2004 Office Action, claims 1-11 were rejected and claims 12-20 were withdrawn from consideration. This Response amends claims 1, 4, 5, and 9. In particular, claim 1 was amended to clarify an aspect of the recited invention and to expedite allowance of the application. Notably, claim 1 has not been narrowed for purposes of patentability. Likewise, claims 4, 5, and 9 have been amended to only correct minor typographical errors in the original text. After entry of the foregoing amendments, claims 1-11 (11 total claims; 1 independent claim) remain pending in the application. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

The Office Action contains a restriction requirement and groups the claims into three allegedly independent inventions: Group I consisting of claims 1-11; Group II consisting of claims 12-15; and Group III consisting of claims 16-20. Applicant affirms the provisional election made with traverse to prosecute Group I, claims 1-11, and confirms the withdrawal of claims 12-20.

The specification, including the Abstract and paragraph 0024, has been amended as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicant requests the withdrawal of the objection to the specification.

FIG. 6 has been corrected to include a "Prior Art" legend and to include reference number 602 corresponding to the shockwave described in the specification at paragraph 0027. The correction to FIG. 6 is reflected in the enclosed replacement sheet, which contains FIGS. 3-6. Applicant requests entry of the replacement sheet and withdrawal of the drawing objection.

Claims 1-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Fauvel, U.S. Pat. No. 5,129,306 ("Fauvel"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

The Examiner alleges that Fauvel discloses a male member having at least one projection, and a female member having flanges and at least one projection on the flanges. In this regard, the Examiner refers to Fauvel's frame 5 as the male member and Fauvel's combined plates 6/7 as the female member. As best understood, the Examiner equates the squared-off shoulders, which form 90 degree angles, to the "projections" recited in claim 1 (these shoulders are best shown in Fauvel's FIG. 3, directly below the upper horizontal mounting bolt and directly above the lower horizontal mounting bolt. Notably, the horizontal mounting bolts affix

the plates 6/7 to the frames 5/11, and, after detonation of the explosive, the separated plates 6/7 remain affixed to the frames 5/11. In contrast, claim 1 now recites that the “explosive device when detonated separates said male member from said female member.” This aspect is clearly illustrated in FIG. 10 of the application. According to the Examiner’s characterization of the reference, Fauvel does not teach this feature and, therefore, lacks at least one element recited in claim 1.

For at least the above reasons, Fauvel does not anticipate the invention of claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant requests the withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 and claims 2-7 (which variously depend from claim 1) under 35 U.S.C. §102(b).

Claims 1-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Richards et al., U.S. Pat. No. 5,585,596 (“Richards”). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

The Examiner also alleges that Richards discloses a male member having at least one projection, and a female member having flanges and at least one projection on the flanges. In this regard, the Examiner refers to Richards’ piston 16 (see Richards’ FIGS. 6A-6D) as the male member and Richards’ cylinder 18 as the female member. As clearly shown in Richards’ FIGS. 6A-6D, the “female member” or cylinder 18 includes no projections or other features that mate with projections on the “male member” or piston 16. Rather, as best shown in Richards’ FIG. 6D, the interior of the cylinder 18 (which contains the explosive device) is completely smooth and without any projections whatsoever. To the extent Richards may disclose structure that projects from the cylinder 18, such structure does not mate with any corresponding projection formed on the piston 16. Consequently, Richards does not teach a female member having at least one projection as recited in claim 1.

For at least the above reasons, Richards does not anticipate the invention of claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant requests the withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 and claims 2-11 (which variously depend from claim 1) under 35 U.S.C. §102(b).


In conclusion, for the reasons given above, all claims now presently in the application are believed allowable and such allowance is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner have any questions or wish to further discuss this application, Applicants request that the Examiner contact the undersigned attorney at (480) 385-5060.

If for some reason Applicant has not requested a sufficient extension and/or has not paid a sufficient fee for this response and/or for the extension necessary to prevent abandonment on this application, please consider this as a request for an extension for the required time period and/or authorization to charge Deposit Account No. 50-2091 for any fee which may be due.

Respectfully submitted,

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